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Healthy Fruit

Prepared by the University of Massachusetts Fruit Program

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http://www.umass.edu/fruitadvisor/healthy_fruit/

Apple Maturity Report

Below are results from recent apple maturity testing of early fall apples at the UMass Cold Spring Orchard in Belchertown. Fruit maturity has not really accelerated yet. On-and-off cool weather has favored some color development. Drop is minimal, and ReTain-treated fruit are holding up very well. The exception is Macoun where a lot of 'push-off' has been observed. Every indication suggests we are on track for a normal harvest. No need to rush at this point, but you should be on track for having Macs picked over the next three weeks. Honeycrisp can be spot-picked this week based on red color development. Monitor drop closely on this apple too. Honeycrisp must be spot-picked carefully over an approximate two-week harvest window. Gala are not ready to harvest until next week at the earliest. Monitor apple blocks closely for color development, taste, and use the starch-index test to help assess maturity. If you need starch-iodine solution, let me know. For details on the starch-index maturity test see:

- http://www.umass.edu/fruitadvisor/clements/articles/sitest.htm

Please note that I also publish apple maturity testing results on the UMass Fruit Advisor here:

- http://www.umass.edu/fruitadvisor/clements/articles/2007apple/index.html

J. Clements

date	variety	drop	size (in.)	color (%red)	firm-ness (lb.)	soluble solids	starch index	taste	disorders	comments
04-Sep	Honeycrisp (no ReTain)	v. few	3.0	35	16	12	5	good		ready for 1st pick based on color
04-Sep	Honeycrisp (ReTain)	none	3.1	60	16	12	4	good		ready for 1st pick based on color
04-Sep	Lindamac	v. few	3.0	95	16	11	3.5	tart, early-mac flavor		very nice, pick by end of week
04-Sep	Marshall Mac	some	3.2	55	14	12	3.5	OK	`	pick by end of week
04-Sep	Buckeye Gala	none	2.9	99	20	11	2	not ready		do not pick yet, has not developed desirable Gala flavor

A bit of a disease note

As the weather has turned very dry, disease issues have all but literally evaporated. Whereas brown rot on stone fruit was rampant back in July -- unless controlled with fungicide sprays -- summer apple diseases have been pretty much a no-show to date. Now the forecast calls for rain early next week so that may change the situation. Late-harvested apples such as Fuji will probably benefit from one more fungicide to control sooty blotch and flyspeck. And the various rots -- black, bitter, white, etc. -- have not been as common (yet) this year as in the past two years. All good news. Still, don't let your guard down and monitor the weather, fruit condition, and harvest progress closely to determine the need for a final fungicide application.

Dan Cooley alerted me to a few web publications by Dr. David Rosenberger of Cornell's Hudson Valley Lab that would be useful for you to refer to if you have the time. The first two are titled *New Options for Decay Control: Fungicides, Sanitation, and the Impact of 1-MCP* and *Inoculum Sources for Penicillium Expansum and Implications for Controlling Blue Mold Decay of Apples* and are in the January 31, 2006 issue of Ohio Fruit ICM News:

- http://southcenters.osu.edu/hort/icmnews/ICMNews10306_.pdf

The other publication is in the Summer 2006 edition of New York Fruit Quarterly and is titled *Keeping Apples Disease-Free During Storage and Shipping*:

- http://www.nyshs.org/fq/06summer/NYFQ%20Summer06.pdf

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Honecycrisp apple 4-September ready for 1st spot-pick for color

Note: Healthy Fruit is now on a once every two weeks publication schedule. The next HF will be published in approximately 2 weeks.